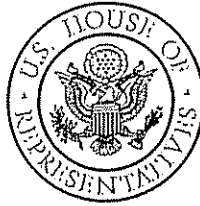


COMMITTEE ON
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CAUCUS



BOBBY L. RUSH
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
1ST DISTRICT, ILLINOIS
WEBSITE: <http://www.house.gov/rush>

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2416 RAYBURN HOB
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4372
(202) 226-0333 (FAX)

CHICAGO OFFICE:
700-706 E. 79TH STREET
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60619
(773) 224-6500
(773) 224-9624 (FAX)

MIDLOTHIAN OFFICE:
3235 WEST 147TH STREET
MIDLOTHIAN, ILLINOIS 60445
(708) 385-9550
(708) 385-3860 (FAX)

June 17, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection of the Energy and Commerce Committee, I am deeply interested in increasing U.S. engagement with Africa, especially through commerce and trade. On April 23, with the support of Congressmen Donald Payne and Gregory Meeks, we launched the "*Africa Partnership for Economic Growth Caucus*." I am excited about its prospects and dedicated to its success. We were honored to have your distinguished United States Trade Representative, Ambassador Ronald Kirk with us on that occasion.

I am pleased that you will visit Ghana, following the G-8 summit, and I enthusiastically offer my full support from Congress on your visionary and far-reaching trade agenda for Africa. I will communicate your commitment to all stakeholders we meet, here and abroad, as my Subcommittee and our Caucus continues its work to expand employment opportunities between American workers and the people of Africa.

I strongly encourage you to expand the commitment of the United States with Sub-Saharan Africa. Our interest should far transcend the humanitarian concerns that have frequently underpinned U.S. engagement with the continent. Economic development, natural resource management, human security, capacity building, and global stability as well as traditional humanitarian assistance are inextricably linked.

Ghana's hopes and challenges reflect the contemporary African experience. The successful election and peaceful transfer of power are to be applauded. It's worth noting, however, that the electorate in Ghana is urgently awaiting electricity, health services and water for its citizens. This nation has a highly educated, talented and young population that is in serious need of expanded access to education, employment and technology. Ghana seeks to play a part in Africa's pivotal role in meeting the world's energy and

mineral needs, countering the transnational threats of terrorism, piracy, global health crises, and in the reduction of the trafficking of people and narcotics. All of these initiatives need strong, sustained support by the United States.

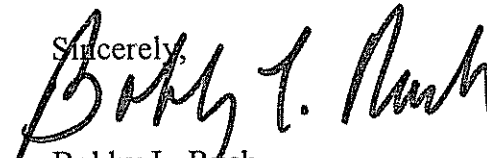
Within the urgent, complex human and national security agenda of lowering poverty, disease, hunger, abuse of women, children and minorities, I fully support your aspiration to stimulate private sector development, two-way trade and investment. Currently, there are thousands of American jobs that depend upon U.S. exports to Africa. There could be many more when Africa realizes its potential. In the near future, we wish to see a larger African middle-class, more job opportunities, increased purchasing power for its consumers and more exports to the continent. Moreover, we would like to see schools filled with children prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century and the new, globalized marketplace. This is my enhanced focus.

Our historical connection with the continent does not automatically give us primacy. Other countries know more about Africa's opportunities and challenges than we do. And, many are intensifying their efforts to advance their ties within the region.

Mr. President, I strongly believe that our nation must, likewise, accelerate its efforts to strengthen our relationship with Africa.

As the Chairman of the Subcommittee and the Caucus, I look forward to working with your Administration to implement a mutually beneficial policy toward Africa that will increase commerce and trade -- especially for women, minorities and small- and medium-sized enterprises. Through these methods and more, we will be able to create and ensure new zones of common security and prosperity.

There is a lot of work to be done and I am proud of the steps you and your Administration have taken, to date, to chart a more productive course between the United States and Africa. I will keep you informed of our progress and I invite your involvement and support.

Sincerely,

Bobby L. Rush
Chairman